

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-06

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FM AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD

TO SECSTATE 920

INFO AMEMBASSY KABUL

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI

AMEMBASSY TEHRAN

C O N F I D E N T I A L ISLAMABAD 7509

LIMDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, PINS, PK, AF, US

SUBJECT: PAKISTAN-AFGHANISTAN RELATIONS

REF: STATE 172577, ISLAMABAD 6997 AND 6998 (NOTAL)

1. I HAD BRIEF OCCASION TO DISCUSS PAKISTAN-AFGHANISTAN
RELATIONS WITH PRIMIN BHUTTO EVENING SEPTEMBER 5 IN
QUETTA, WHERE I HAD ACCOMPANIED RELIEF COORDINATOR
MAURICE WILLIAMS FOR MEETING WITH PRIMIN ON FLOOD DISASTER.
I REFERRED TO OUR LAST MEETING AT LARKANA ON AUGUST 26
WHEN WE HAD AGREED ON THE HIGH IMPORTANCE OF MAINTAINING GOOD
RELATIONS BETWEEN PAKISTAN AND AFGHANISTAN AND WHEN BHUTTO
HAD EXPRESSED CONCERN OVER AFGHANISTAN INVOLVEMENT IN
PAKISTAN'S DOMESTIC MATTERS. I SAID BHUTTO SHOULD KNOW
THAT OUR EMBASSY IN KABUL HAD ALREADY EXPRESSED TO
GOA THE IMPORTANCE WE ATTACH TO A PEACEFUL RELATION-
SHIP BETWEEN THE TWO COUNTRIES. WE WILL BE REITERATING
THAT LINE IN KABUL, STRESSING THE IMPORTANCE WE ATTACH TO
PAKISTAN AND AFGHANISTAN FINDING WAYS TO MAINTAIN PEACE-
FUL RELATIONS AND THUS PROMOTE PEACE, STABILITY AND CO-
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OPERATION IN THE REGION. IN THIS CONTEXT, AS BHUTTO

KNEW, WE ATTACH HIGH IMPORTANCE TO PAKISTAN'S STABILITY AND INTEGRITY. WE CONSIDER INAPPROPRIATE ANY INTERFERENCE BY OUTSIDE COUNTRIES IN PAKISTAN'S INTERNAL AFFAIRS, AND GOA IS AWARE OF THIS. I NOTED THAT, AT SAME TIME, USG INFLUENCE IN AFGHANISTAN ON THE EMOTIONAL ISSUE OF AFGHAN-ISTAN-PAKISTAN RELATIONS IS LIMITED AND COULD WELL DECLINE FURTHER IN THE EVENT OF CONTINUED AFGHANISTAN-PAKISTAN TENSIONS. BHUTTO ACKNOWLEDGED LATTER POINT AND THANKED ME FOR ABOVE EXPLANATION.

2. I ASKED BHUTTO HOW HIS TOUR TO MEET THE PEOPLE IN VARIOUS REGIONS OF BALUCHISTAN WAS GOING. HE SAID IT WAS GOING WELL. THE CROWDS WERE FRIENDLY. THERE WERE SCATTERED AREAS OF TROUBLE IN THE PROVINCE AND HE WOULD LIKE TO SEE THEM END. ONLY THAT DAY, IN ONE OF HIS PUBLIC MEETINGS OUTSIDE QUETTA, HE HAD SAID GOP WAS READY TO BRING ITS TROOPS BACK TO BARRACKS IF THE RESISTERS STOPPED THEIR SHOOTING. HE WAS KEEPING DOOR OPEN TO NEW TALKS WITH OPPOSITION.

3. I ASKED WHETHER BHUTTO WAS STILL CONSIDERING AN EARLY VISIT TO KABUL TO ESTABLISH CONTACTS WITH THE NEW GOA LEADERSHIP. HE REPLIED THAT VISIT TO KABUL WOULD NOT BE POSSIBLE BEFORE HIS TRIP TO U.S. AFTER THAT HE WOULD CONSIDER WHETHER SITUATION AND TIMING WERE RIGHT. AT PRESENT, GOP WAS UNCERTAIN OF DAUD'S STRENGTH (VIS-A-VIS YOUNG OFFICERS) AS LEADER OF RULING AFGHANISTAN GROUP. IT WAS ALSO UNCERTAIN OF PARTICULAR IDEOLOGICAL LEANING, IF ANY, THE COUP OFFICERS HAVE; BUT IN ANY EVENT, BHUTTO SAID, IT IS IMPORTANT FOR THE TWO COUNTRIES TO WORK OUT PEACEFULLY ANY PROBLEMS THEY MAY HAVE BETWEEN THEM AND THAT WAS COURSE HE INTENDED TO FOLLOW.

4. COMMENT: GOP WILL DOUBTLESS REMAIN CONCERNED OVER COURSE OF EVENTS IN AFGHANISTAN AND PARTICULARLY OVER GOA POLICY ON PUSHTUNISTAN. THIS LATEST EXCHANGE BETWEEN BHUTTO AND US IS ENOUGH TO HOLD THE LINE AS TO THE POSSIBLE CONCERNS RE USG POLICY THIS MATTER, BUT I ANTICIPATE THAT BHUTTO WILL RAISE GENERAL SUBJECT IN HIS FORTHCOMING TALKS IN WASHINGTON.

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